



**Representative
Eric Pettigrew**

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Committees:

Juvenile Justice &
Family Law (*Vice Chair*)

Children & Family
Services

Trade & Economic
Development

Winter

2004

A Report to the 37th District

Dear Neighbor:

It is a tremendous honor to serve our citizens and neighborhoods in the state House of Representatives!

With the 2004 Legislative Session off to a fast start, this is a good time to emphasize how much your participation means to me. I want to know what you think before I make a decision on any bill before us. So please stay in touch!

A major objective of this Legislature will be the development of a supplemental budget. This budget must reflect changes in our economy since last spring when we originally wrote the **2003-2005 budget**. We'll also discuss medical-malpractice insurance — with a mission to make sure every family has safe, affordable medical care.

I want to let you and our neighbors know what I am concentrating on in the 2004 Legislative Session.

- **Fighting hunger.** It isn't right that some people throw away more food in a day or two than other people see in a month or more.
- **Strengthening our economy.** We can work toward high-quality economic development that encourages existing and startup companies.
- **Supporting non-parental relatives caring for children.** People who step up to the responsibility of raising the children of their relatives deserve all the support we can provide.

Thank you for being interested in my thoughts about your Legislature.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

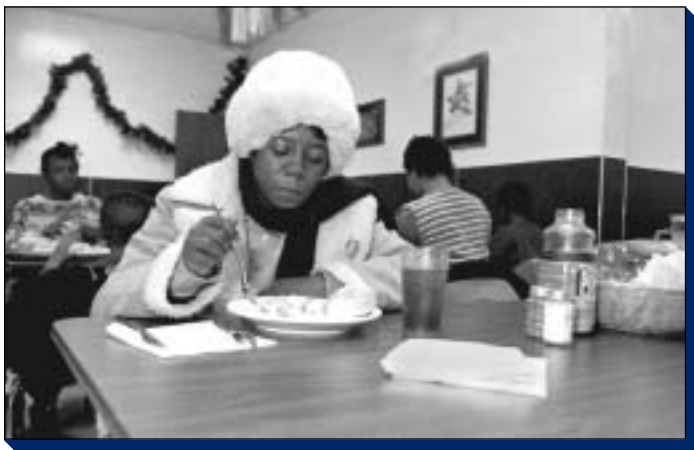
Eric Pettigrew
State Representative
37th Legislative District

Fighting hunger:

This is a 'war' that our country absolutely must win

If one child is going to bed hungry, then that's one too many. If one senior citizen has to choose between decent meals and paying the rent, then that's one too many. The truth is that if any family is doing without groceries, then our society is starving for justice.

Washington state has the fifth-worst rate of hunger in the country — and our state has been in this infamous top five for many years. Many people here in the Evergreen State — more than in most other states — tend to live on the edge of hunger, if not over the cliff. Washington is one of only a handful of states in which the rate of food insecurity and outright hunger are worse than the national average.



More than 4,500 infants were taken to food banks in Seattle last year — a 30-percent increase over the previous year. Almost 60,000 children under 18 years old visited food banks in Seattle last year — an almost 10-percent increase over the year before. For a lot of Seattle and other Washington people, there's not much distance between having a fairly good breakfast this morning — and having an empty dinner plate tonight. And no: It isn't because they choose to live that way!

This year in Olympia, I'm sponsoring what I believe is a landmark proposal. The bill — which is aimed at getting us closer to making hunger a thing of the past — is called the "Act for Hungry Families." **This legislation aims to:**

- **Provide more meals for children.** Within five years, school-breakfast programs should be available in every elementary school.
- **Extend the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.**
- **Simplify requirements for reporting when a person makes an application for some help.**

If passed, this bill will feed thousands of families with little cost to the state.

Strengthening our economy:

Neighborhoods deserve dedicated and honest attention

I will continue to take the lead on legislation that emphasizes the economic development we need for solid businesses that assure dependable family-wage jobs and affordable housing for our communities.



A Report to the 37th District

I have prime-sponsored three pieces of legislation. They are:

1. **Tax increment financing.** This legislation aims to spark economic development in blighted areas by providing funds for sidewalks, streets, sewers, and park-and-ride facilities.
2. **Small-business incubator program.** This legislation will create a capital-and-operating grant program for existing small-business incubators. The grant program could also be used to help create new small-business incubators.
3. **Increasing loans for women- and minority-owned businesses.** This legislation would increase the total amount of funding available in the current linked-deposit loan program.

Caring for kin:

We're building on a key policy we passed last session

Our society should do everything possible whenever an individual or a family takes on the responsibility of raising a young relative.

Children need continuity and stability. Children need their family — a caring relative to love them and raise them when some kind of circumstance takes them away from their birth parents. (Right now, more than 32,000 Washington children are living in a kinship-care placement.)

Kinship caregivers are very often the grandparents of a child or children for whom they're caring. Before the child came into their lives, the grandparents in many cases were already struggling to keep a roof over their heads and put food on their table. A large percentage of them aren't in the system that provides assistance for kinship caregivers.

Last year's legislation directs the Department of Social and Health Services to work with kinship caregivers to make sure these good people know about support and resources available to them.

This year, I am focusing on two projects:

1. **Creating a fund for informal kinship caregivers** to help with such basic needs as food, clothing, and housing.
2. **Establishing an affidavit** to allow kinship caregivers access to the medical care that children need.

I am excited about this legislation because it will prevent more children in our state from slipping through the cracks of our society.



Representative Eric Pettigrew

Town Hall:

Please take time to tell
us your ideas on government


***Citizens should never hesitate to get involved in their government —
ideas from real people often make the best legislation!***

Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos and I look forward to hosting a Town Hall meeting on **Saturday, February 21**, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The Town Hall will be held at the **Garfield Community Center**, which is located at 2323 East Cherry Street.

We hope to see you and your family. We'll talk about the legislative session — the progress of measures mentioned in my report today, for instance. But mostly we want to listen!

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